

## Wellness Want to Live Longer? Fit Outweighs Fat Study: Fit People Live Longer, Regardless of Weight Changes

Fitness trumps fat when it comes to living longer. In a new study of more than 14,000 men, those who maintained or boosted their fitness level were less likely to die from any cause, including heart disease. This was true even if their weight stayed the same or increased compared to men whose fitness levels dipped over time. The new findings appear in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association*.

It's hard to lose weight and maintain that loss. This study points to increased endurance as a potentially more attainable goal with even greater dividends. "Many people worry about their weight and weight gain, but based on our study, weight change is less important than fitness changes," says researcher Duck-chul Lee, PhD, an exercise physiologist at the University of South Carolina's Arnold School of Public Health in Columbia.

His advice? "Worry less about your weight and focus more on maintaining or improving your fitness level," Lee says. Lee and colleagues assessed the men's fitness via treadmill tests. After 11 years, men who became more fit or maintained their level of fitness were less likely to die from heart disease, stroke, or any other cause than were men who became less physically fit over time. Every little bit helped. Each increase in their endurance level resulted in a lower risk of death. The men who did grow less fit were more likely to die from any cause, regardless of any changes in their weight, the study shows. Men in the study were aged 44, on average, and were mostly white and middle or upper class. About 90% of these men were considered normal weight, so the results may not hold among all obese men. Normal-weight women, however, would likely see similar benefits, Lee says.

### Thin or Obese, Fit Is It

The new findings validate previous studies on the health benefits of fitness, says American Heart Association spokesman Richard Stein, MD. He is the director of the Urban Community Cardiology Program at the New York University School of Medicine. "Fitness is a much greater predictor of [death] than weight," Stein says.

"If you have been struggling with your weight for years, putting your work into endurance fitness is clearly a very powerful predictor of living longer," he says. This advice may also hold for people who are obese -- with an exception or two. "Some exercises may be difficult to do if you are significantly obese," Stein tells WebMD.

Speak to a fitness professional and develop an appropriate program so you don't injure yourself before you reap any of the benefits, he says. As for people who are thin, "don't fool yourself into thinking, 'I am skinny and will be fine if I don't do any exercise.' You won't be," Stein says. "Being [inactive] is not OK, even if you are skinny." Ultimately, though, Robert Myerburg, MD, a cardiology professor at the University of Miami School of Medicine, has the best option. "I'd rather someone be fit and not fat," he says. "That is the ideal."

## **OSHA news: Reminds employers to post injury/illness summaries:**

Beginning Feb. 1, employers who are required to keep the OSHA Form 300 Injury and Illness log must post a summary of the log. Employers must post OSHA's Form 300A from Feb. 1 to April 30, 2012 in a common area wherever notices to workers are usually posted. The summary must list the total numbers of job-related injuries and illnesses that occurred in 2011. All establishment summaries must be certified by a company executive. Copies of the OSHA Forms 300, 300A and 301 are available for download on the OSHA Recordkeeping Web page. See OSHA's Recordkeeping Handbook for more information on posting requirements for OSHA's Form 300A.

### **New worker educational publication on protection from noise in construction**

OSHA published a new educational publication for construction workers, *Protecting Yourself from Noise in Construction*. The booklet, written for workers and employers, provides information on the hazards of loud noise in construction, how noise levels are measured, and how to find out if noise on the job site or from tools is loud enough to cause hearing loss. It also gives examples of administrative and engineering controls employers can use to reduce worker exposure to noise, as well as information on the proper selection and use of personal hearing protection. To order copies of this or other OSHA publications please call 1-800-321-OSHA or 202-693-1999 or visit OSHA's Publications Web page.

### **OSHA educational facts sheets provide information on preventing falls in residential construction**

Three recent Fact Sheets published by OSHA address fall prevention during roofing operations in residential construction. These and other Fact Sheets can be downloaded from OSHA's Publications Web page: <http://www.osha.gov/pls/publications>

- Reducing Falls During Residential Construction: Roof Sheathing\*
- Reducing Falls During Residential Construction: Installing Standing Seam Metal Roofs\*
- Reducing Falls During Residential Construction: Re-Roofing\*